

**ETHIOPIA IS BEING CIRCLED BY ITS ENEMIES:  
Oppose Ould-Abdallah's Proposal to Deploy Saudi and Pakistani Troops**  
By Tecola W. Hagos

“I pointed out to you the stars (the moon) and all you saw was the tip of my finger.”

Anonymous

**I. The Enemies of Ethiopia are Circling**

The enemies of Ethiopia are circling like vultures in an ever-shrinking circle. We have also in Meles Zenawi our worst enemy working from within our bosom ceding our land and destroying our unity through his destructive and inane ethnic based federalism. The recent treasonous act of Meles Zenawi is the handing over to the Sudan more than 144 villages and tens of thousands of acres of fertile farm land and river basin from the Begemder area. If we do not take steps now, the result is the destruction of our Ethiopia. I am sick with worry about the impending doom coming our way unless we change course and our perception of ourselves and that of the world. If we allow this treasonous Government of Meles Zenawi keep up this policy of appeasement and ceding our territory to nations that have had a history of hostility toward Ethiopia, we will end up being the first tiny nation with circular boundary with a diameter of few hundred miles.

There is not that much time to relax now, for we have to take charge of our destiny. It is not per se the fear of Ethiopia disappearing from the face of the Earth that is in the back of my mind. For very many great civilizations had bite the dust, but it is the idea of losing without a fight to thugs and terrorists that is infinitely degrading and humiliating to our great nation that I want to urge fellow Ethiopians to confront our enemies wherever they maybe.

The report to the Security Council by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, Ban ki Moon's Special Envoy to Somalia, where he outlined his vision for Somalia, is a direct threat to the very existence of Ethiopia. Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah is a Mauritanian national. Mauritania is a nation of about three and a half million totally Moslem people (Arabs, Mixed people, and Africans). The history of Mauritania is punctured with Yemeni Arab slave traders who finally occupied the area until the French took over in the early Twentieth Century until Mauritania's independence in 1960. I write about the past vainglorious history of that nation as it was known in history as the worst slave-trading nation in the area. Yemeni Arabs dominated it for over four hundred years that resulted in the total Islamization of the entire population. It is an individual from such a nation that is determining the fate of our nation that is twenty times more populated and with impeccable history of freedom and independence and great culture. It is incredible that the new Secretary General would appoint an individual, with that type of national background and affiliation, to the Somali crises that is intertwined with the future of Ethiopia.

The urgency of taking steps to derail the subversive ideas aimed at the very heart of Ethiopia by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah in the guise of report submitted to the United Nations Security Council of a solution to the Somali crises ought to be the responsibility of every patriotic Ethiopian and the Government of Ethiopia as well. In a world where fanatic Moslem Jihadists and terrorists are attacking peaceful unarmed civilians and

political leaders who value freedom and democracy, we Ethiopians must have a clear stand against such subversive elements in our society and in our neighbors. The assassination of democratic minded courageous former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on Thursday, December 27, 2000, is one more tragedy of the new reality of our world. Pakistan is on the verge of giving in to the demands of Moslem extremists. Pakistan's own existence is questionable as things are unfolding at this moment. Taking all of the history of Pakistan since 1947 and the recent assassination of Benazir Bhutto, it is unacceptable to suggest Pakistan to play a role as part of a peacekeeping force in Somalia.

This Report and address by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah to the Security Council of the United Nations is the worst I have ever read for sometime. The Report and the address attached hereunder with this article. On the surface, it may seem like a suggestion of an experienced international statesman. However, on closer scrutiny the report is full of contradictions, poor judgment, and misleading suggestions. First of all, the Special Envoy does not seem to have understood the gravity of the problem in Somalia judging from his amateurish suggestion of bringing Saudi Arabia as a moral agent to bear on the problem in Somalia. It is absolutely unconscionable for anyone to suggest one of the most barbaric governments in the world as an agent of morality. Saudi Arabia is the worst abuser of human rights, a country that routinely beheads individuals under its primitive legal system even offences that are considered in most countries private relations of consenting adults. This is a country that had defied the human rights of individuals to worship and express their views—a nation that will not allow Christians to worship even in private in their own homes. Just on that point alone, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah should be dismissed from his post for suggesting Saudi Arabia as a moral agent to solve the Somali crises.

What I gathered from the Report is that Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah is an insensitive, narrow minded closet fanatic no better than the Wahabi Sunni clerics who are holding the entire Saudi Population hostage to their fanaticism and primitive ideas of social justice, law, and human rights. There is not a single reference in the report on the feelings of Somali Citizens except to denigrate and insult them as subhuman creatures who would be better off under the guidance of the worst abuser of human rights, the Saudi Government. After all, in 2005 to the outrage of the many citizens of different countries around the world, Saudi authorities executed six Somalis on Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2005 without consent from any Somali government representative or Somalis expatriates in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis continued with their barbaric form of punishment beheading two Ethiopian women and a man on some alleged crimes, acts that were in all probability self-defense against abusers in a country where immigrants are routinely abused without protection from the legal system of Saudi Arabia.

Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah reference to the political situation in that part of the Horn is far removed from reality in that he does not acknowledge the fact that the nation of Somaliland is a distinct State with an international personality. It is not at all up to the United Nations to award nationhood. Membership in the United Nations is not a criterion to determine statehood. Furthermore, the political reality of Somalia and the reason for the degenerative breakdown and disintegration of its civil and political life is not properly

identified. He glossed over completely how petrodollar from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Libya et cetera and military training from Pakistan and later from the Soviet Union played a major role leading to the current state of affair in Somalia. The whole regional subversion by such countries was aimed at the destruction of Ethiopia, which is perceived as an enemy Christian island of ancient civilization.

It is unbelievable that Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah would also suggest Pakistan to play a role in stabilizing Somalia. What an amateurish proposal, especially when you consider the fact that in 1947 to 1948 when the case of Eritrea was being debated at the United Nations, Pakistan was the most vociferous country that opposed Ethiopia at every turn. Pakistan is Ethiopia's enemy. Pakistan's hostility did not stop once the United Nations resolved the issue of Eritrea's federation with Ethiopia, but continued to this day in all forms of subversive activities against the interest of Ethiopia. It is unfathomable how an envoy of the United Nations will come up with such stupid suggestion to let the enemies of Ethiopia takeover Somalia and introduce their soldiers in the guise of serving the wishes of the United Nations. Such move will further destabilize the region, for Ethiopia is not just going to allow such aggression and encirclement by enemy forces. Ethiopia is already under attack for the last thirty years by Moslem fanatics and recently threatened by Somali Jihadists financed by those same countries.

Is the flawed suggestion by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah the best solution to the Somali crises the new Secretary General could come up? How are we going to have confidence in a Secretary General who appointed as his envoy an individual who would seem devoid of elementary rules of diplomacy and peaceful resolution of conflicts? When do we stop subjecting ourselves to the judgments of opportunist individuals, mediocre intellectuals, partisan politicians et cetera who have compromised our national security and peaceful coexistence? The Secretary General has been making mediocre judgments in his short tenure so far, and his work product is not impressive at all. The urgency of taking steps to derail the subversive ideas contained in the report and address by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah to the United Nations Security Council, as a solution to the Somali crises, ought to be the responsibility of every patriotic Ethiopian and the Government of Ethiopia as well.

## **II. Where are our Diplomats?**

Where are our diplomats while all these manipulation is taking place marginalizing our national interest? Ethiopia is not represented with effective diplomats either at the United Nations in New York or the United Nations Offices in Geneva. This is the most crucial time in our history; thus, we need to have the most vigorous, well-educated, most patriotic, and well experienced diplomats at such posts and not some errand boys for Meles Zenawi. Even at the African Union Headquarters, we do not have vigorous representation even though the office is down the street from the Foreign Affairs Ministry of Ethiopia. We have a very weak Minister of Foreign Affairs, and a Deputy more interested in playing local political in-fights and pleasing his bosses than anything else. Ethiopia's diplomatic representatives have done nothing to counter the anti-Ethiopian forces that have succeeded in having the upper hand vis-à-vis Ethiopia to a great extent, which resulted in the European parliament in tandem being anti-Ethiopia not just critical

of Meles Zenawi. Whose responsibility is it to protect Ethiopia's vital national interest? In the international arena, Meles Zenawi has appointed individuals whose commitment to Ethiopia is marginal, and mostly individuals who reflect Meles's treasonous stand in regard to Ethiopia's very many national interests. There is no one protecting the vital interest of Ethiopia.

It is not enough just opening missions in foreign countries. The ambassadors and other diplomats must be used as much as generals are used to protect the territorial integrity and Sovereignty of Ethiopia. I understand that it is very difficult for a diplomat to be patriotic when the leader that appointed such diplomat is going around ceding national territory to neighboring countries. Nevertheless, despite such hurdle, every Ethiopian must find a way to preserve the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ethiopia. The money and energy dedicated to such cause is worth expending. For example, at the United Nations they should have influenced the Secretary General to appoint someone from non-Moslem and non-Arab nation. As a matter of long term strategy they should have discouraged the interference of the United Nations and European countries and insisted on Africa Union participation only. I have reason to believe that the idea to bring the United Nations into the Somali crises is the brainchild of Arabs and Europeans meant to undermine the influence of the United States through Ethiopia in the Horn.

It is the duty of the Ethiopian Government to show the danger in having Saudi Arabia fanatics and Jihadists control Somalia. Foremost is the fact that such cultural invasion by fundamentalist Islamists is against the culture of Somali people who tend to have far more democratic ideals in their dealings with each other including the rights enjoyed by Somali women unlike Saudi Women who are under an oppressive system that denied them their fundamental human rights. There is customary law and practice that had been the fabric of Somali society and culture not Shari'a (Koran) law. What is going to stop the Saudis and the Pakistanis from extending their reach into Djibouti and remove the US presence in the area by mounting civil unrest? The Saudis and the Pakistanis, once inside Somalia under the cover of the United Nations, they will for sure instigate unrest in Ethiopia since that is the purpose of all these diplomatic maneuverings. By now, we ought to have learned a thing or two on how terrorists carry out their destructive missions by politicizing religious beliefs into fanaticism and organizing simple people to carry out attacks on ordered and democratic governmental structures and tolerant societies that respect fundamental human rights of the individual. The Red Sea will surly be turned into an Arab Sea, making the use of that Sea lane subject to the arbitrary whims of the Saudis, the Sudanese, the Pakistanis, the Somali Jihadists. These are all factors that should be taken into consideration before adopting any of the suggestions by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah contained in his report to the United Nations Security Council.

There is also a question of qualification and experience that determines how effective our diplomats are. Even those with great education falter when it comes to diplomatic performance. Diplomacy is not just pleasant talks, but requires strategy, complex thinking and planning, and great social skill. I cringe when I reflect upon our current diplomats in contrasting them with our great Ethiopian statesmen and diplomats during Emperor Haile Selassie's Reign, such as Tsehafi Taezaz Lorenzo, Tsehafi Taezaz Akililu, Belaten Geta

Hiruy, Blata Ephrem, and many others including the young Endalkatchew. The Ethiopian Government must revamp its international participation and diplomatic effort. New task forces for the Somali crises and for the United Nations must be organized on the double. By all means the Security Council must be stopped from launching a new peace monitoring force especially a force that is constituted from countries named by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. This man from Mauritania must be removed from his post as Envoy of the Secretary General by all means from doing further damage. The United States Government must be warned about the danger of implementing the devious suggestions by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah.

One important national concern that is above everything else is that our people are being divided by party affiliation, ethnic groups, religious sects et cetera. When we are divided we lose our patriotic zeal. As individuals, we can be broken easily one by one, but united we can withstand any assault on us by Jihadists and fanatics or neo-colonialists. My appeal is to all leaders, both political and religious, to set aside differences and focus on our immediate security needs. Under the circumstances, I urge Meles Zenawi to step aside as his last redeeming act for all his treasonous activities since 1991, and let patriotic Ethiopians lead the nation to safety. Very many capable Ethiopians could do the job. Let us not forget the fact that Meles Zenawi was barely out of high school when he started his career as a leader of the TPLF, and finally President and later Prime Minister of Ethiopia. He can be replaced as easily as we can change our shirts without undue burden, for the betterment and security of Ethiopia. Ω

Tecola W. Hagos  
Washington DC  
December 27, 2007

Attachments :



United Nations

## Security Council

### SC/9203

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Security Council  
5805<sup>th</sup> Meeting (AM)

**'BUSINESS AS USUAL' APPROACH TO SOMALIA WILL NO LONGER WORK, SECURITY COUNCIL**

**WARNED IN BRIEFING BY SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE**

**He Calls for Immediate, Effective United Nations Initiatives, All-inclusive Measures by Transitional Federal Government**

While new immediate and effective political and security initiatives of the United Nations would not be “a magic recipe for peace”, they could help Somalia end its intractable 17-year-old conflict, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for that country, said during a briefing to the Security Council this morning.

Warning that the Organization’s “business as usual” approach would prove ineffectual in Somalia – where 3 million people had been forced to flee as refugees and another 1 million were alleged to have been internally displaced – Mr. Ould-Abdallah called for a new strategy. Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government must also be more active and make room for neutral personalities and competent opposition members in order to effectively and peacefully form a self-supporting and self-administering Government of national unity and as representative a Cabinet as possible.

Selected members of the Transitional Federal Government and the opposition should meet often to prepare for further, higher-level meetings, but large conference or freelance mediators should not be allowed to participate, he said. Those discussions should be held near Somalia or in a location where most observers following the situation were based. Once agreement was reached, the discussions should be concluded within a fixed time frame. Political leaders, the business community and prominent members of the Somali diaspora should be invited to contribute as well.

He said he was preparing the agenda and identifying a possible list of participants, as well as the timing of such a process. “I am convinced that, when left alone, Somalis are ready to join ranks and efforts to get their country back on its feet in the next few months.” At the same time, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) must remain operational and its effectiveness must be strengthened through the deployment of extra capacity to stabilize the country. That new “peace presence” was essential and neighbouring Saudi Arabia, which harboured many Somali refugees, should be invited to play a leading role. Support from one or two North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member States should also be made available, if necessary. On a practical level, the United Nations and the Transitional Federal Government should come to a swift agreement in close consultation with other concerned countries.

The Special Representative said that, with the Secretary-General’s support, he planned to pursue that road to peace without delay, and called for the Council’s blessing for a “group of partners” to reinforce Somalia’s security capacity and deploy its peace presence, thus bringing about

national reconciliation, encouraging the international community's return to Mogadishu and beyond, and allaying the security concerns of neighbouring States. Such an approach would limit the conflict and promote economic assistance and military cooperation. Sanctioned by a major international conference, it should mark Somalia's complete return to the international fold. "There are serious consequences for Somalia, the region and probably the world if the conflict is not addressed and a definite, lasting solution agreed on."

Warning that a second option — withdrawing from Somalia altogether — would provide an easy alternative to the Organization's costly continued engagement, considering the limited number of international staff inside Somalia, he said it would, however, risk further crippling the country and creating an even more serious power vacuum. Moreover, humanitarian aid had reduced the population's suffering and the withdrawal of the United Nations presence would present an ethical problem. The Organization's hesitation to intervene in some conflicts but not others of similar gravity would significantly impact public opinion.

South Africa's representative said he hoped the Council would revisit the African Union's request for an expedited United Nations deployment in Somalia, noting, however, the unfortunate but subtle reluctance, if not resistance, to that request. The international community had a responsibility not to abandon the Somali people, and the way to stop their country from constantly threatening international peace and security was to encourage and support the political process and to deploy a peacekeeping operation. AMISOM, which was no longer sustainable or effective, had been deployed as a stop-gap until the United Nations could deploy. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should speed up the deployment of an assessment mission to facilitate further United Nations engagement in Somalia.

Similarly, Somalia's representative, speaking on behalf of the Transitional Federal Government and "all the suffering people of Somalia", wholeheartedly endorsed Mr. Ould-Abdallah's proposal for swift action, saying many Somalis around over the world wondered why it was so easy for the Council to move faster in other conflict locations. The first step should be to implement already decided measures, such as the deployment of African Union peacekeepers. The Council must also come up with an acceptable formula to move ahead in the political and security spheres. It would not be in the Organization's interest to delay real action.

Portugal's representative, speaking on behalf of the European Union, encouraged the newly appointed Prime Minister of Somalia, Nur Hassan Hussein, to invite all political forces inside and outside Somalia that renounced violence and accepted the Transitional Federal Charter. The Transitional Federal Institutions were primarily responsible for implementing the outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress and creating a road map for actions, which must include preparations for a constitutional referendum and elections by 2009. The European Union called on all other actors in the country to ensure humanitarian access to those in need and on the Transitional Federal Government to investigate all human rights abuses and bring those responsible to justice.

Also making statements were the representatives of China, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Slovakia, Belgium, Ghana, France, Panama, Russian Federation, Peru, United States, Qatar, Congo, Italy and Norway.

The meeting began at 10:15 a.m. and adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

### Background

Before the Security Council was the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (document S/2007/658), dated 7 November and covering developments in the country in the four months since the previous report of 25 June (document S/2007/381). It includes the progress and outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress, efforts to promote an all-inclusive political process and an update on the security and human rights situation.

According to the report, the political situation during the period under review was marked by the exacerbation of divisions within the Transitional Federal Institutions, the hardening of the opposition stance and the intensification of the insurgency. The National Reconciliation Congress, held in Mogadishu from 15 July to 30 August, saw the participation of some 2,600 delegates, but some of the Haawiye subclans, as well as opposition groups based in the Eritrean capital of Asmara, refused to attend. Participants agreed on a number of outcomes, including the announcement of an end to all conflicts and feuds among Somali clans that began in 1991.

Stressing that the humanitarian situation in south-central Somalia continues to deteriorate, the report says that 1.5 million people overall are in need of assistance, a 50 per cent increase since the beginning of the year. There are currently 750,000 internally displaced persons, and humanitarian access continues to be a challenge. On 17 October, Transitional Federal



Government soldiers violated the United Nations premises in Mogadishu and arrested the head of the World Food Programme (WFP) Office, causing the agency temporarily to suspend food distribution. On 22 October, the staff member was released and food aid was resumed. By the end of September, the consolidated appeal for Somalia was 53.2 per cent funded, with \$161 million committed out of the \$304 million required.

There has been no significant improvement in the security situation, the report states, noting that the situation in Mogadishu remains volatile, with the Transitional Federal Government and Ethiopian forces continuing to concentrate on securing the city and seeking to apprehend and disarm insurgent elements. Limited progress has been made to date. Elsewhere, lawlessness and inter-clan violence continues in large areas of central and southern Somalia. Piracy is on the rise again and the President of France announced his readiness to send warships to protect humanitarian supplies. On 17 September, fighting between Somaliland, a self-declared independent republic, and the semi-autonomous region of Puntland resulted in a high number of casualties.

The Secretary-General believes that, under the circumstances, the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation cannot be considered a realistic and viable option. For security reasons, it has not been feasible to send a technical assessment mission. A strategic assessment of United Nations interventions has been initiated in order to provide an integrated approach and framework for United Nations engagement in Somalia. It may be advisable to look at additional security options, including the deployment of a robust multinational force or coalition of the willing. In due time, such a force could be built to a level that would enable Ethiopian forces to commence a partial, then complete withdrawal.

According to the report, the United Nations is elaborating a two-track approach for Somalia, based on a political track to encourage dialogue within the Transitional Federal Government with all opposition groups within and outside the country, and a security track that would necessitate the strengthening of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to a level that would allow the withdrawal of foreign forces. The Secretary-General recommends the strengthening of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia, and the United Nations has also embarked on developing a coherent peacebuilding strategy.

The Secretary-General calls upon the leaders of the Transitional Federal Institutions to implement without delay the recommendations of the National Reconciliation Congress, including the development of a road map for the

completion of the constitutional process, preparations for a national population census and the holding of elections scheduled for 2009. Concerned about the continuing piracy off the coast, he reiterates his call to Member States with naval and military assets in the region to take action to protect merchant shipping transporting humanitarian aid.

#### Briefing by Secretary-General's Special Representative

AHMEDOU OULD-ABDALLAH, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, said the United Nations and other international partners were still making extraordinary efforts to assist Somalia under extremely harsh conditions. AMISOM was doing excellent work with limited resources and manpower, and it was time to draw up a road map for the future. The conflict was not an African Union, Arab League or Organization of the Islamic Conference issue. The frequently shifting allegiances between and within clans showed that factors other than ethnicity, religion or liberation were responsible for Somalia's continuing instability. A small group drawn from various backgrounds was driven by lust for money and power. Some did not want peace at all.

The conflict was becoming increasingly dangerous, he said, noting that 3 million Somalis had been forced to flee as refugees while another 1 million were allegedly internally displaced. The only work available for youth was to participate in the conflict. The situation had continued over the last 17 years despite 14 peace agreements, and there was little reason to believe there was any chance of success if the international community continued business as usual. "There are serious consequences for Somalia, the region and probably the world if the conflict is not addressed and a definite, lasting solution agreed on."

In light of the seriousness of the situation, coupled with the multiple human and security impacts of the crisis, he proposed three possible international approaches to Somalia. The first course of action would be simply to continue the current status quo; the second would be an organized withdrawal of the international community, in effect accepting its inability to protect the population or to bring about a lasting peace. The third would be immediate and effective action on the political and security fronts. That was not "a magic recipe for peace", but it could help Somalia move in the right direction. Compared to Sierra Leone, Liberia and other African civil wars, efforts to resolve the Somali conflict had failed to bear fruit so far. The internationally recognized Transition Federal Government had not managed to take control of Mogadishu or end the violence. The continuing fighting had provided a cover for human rights abuses against civilians and

journalists. The infrastructure had disintegrated, malnutrition was widespread and roadblocks and extortion hindered trade and the delivery of assistance.

Aid might give the impression of addressing the root causes of the conflict but it did not, he stressed. Increased humanitarian aid and improved access for aid agencies was helpful, but it would not end the violence. National reconciliation remained elusive despite repeated efforts, leaving Somalis and their neighbours frustrated, resentful and cynical. However, the current military situation could not last forever and should not be used as an excuse to continue business as usual. As for the second option, a withdrawal would provide an alternative to the costly, continued engagement in Somalia and it may not be a difficult operation as only a limited number of international staff was in Somalia and none in Mogadishu. However, the country would be further crippled by the withdrawal, as more groups or clans would appear and the resultant fighting could create a humanitarian catastrophe. The Transitional Federal Government had difficulties in governing the country and defending itself effectively.

Warning that a withdrawal could create an even more serious power vacuum, he said that instead of moving towards unity, small fiefdoms carrying out abuses and illicit activities would emerge and factions with a passion for violence and looting would rule the day. Most outsiders – often blamed for Somalia's problems – had intervened because the Somalis had yet to unite and govern themselves peacefully, thereby reassuring their neighbours. Moreover, humanitarian aid had reduced the population's suffering and the lack of a United Nations presence would present an ethical problem as the hesitation to intervene in some conflicts and not others of similar gravity would significantly impact public opinion. The third option of taking effective action would entail new political and security initiatives. The Transitional Federal Government would have to be more active and make room for neutral personalities and competent opposition members, with the objective of forming an effectively and peacefully self-supporting and self-administering Government and as representative a Cabinet as possible.

Emphasizing that the United Nations must launch diplomatic action to mobilize consensus to stabilize the country, he proposed two simultaneous actions on the political and security fronts. The Transitional Federal Government should take concrete steps to unite and strengthen its own ranks, while also making approaches towards the opposition. The creation of a Government of national unity was one of the best ways to do that. There should be more meetings between selected members of the Transitional

Federal Government and the opposition to prepare the ground for further and higher-level meetings. No large conference or freelance mediators would be welcomed. For such a critical path to stabilization, the opposition should be part of the political process and assume its responsibilities. Those discussions should be held near Somalia or in a location where most observers following the situation were based. Once the agreement was reached on talks, the discussions should be concluded within a fixed time frame.

Political leaders, the business community and prominent members of the Somali diaspora should be invited to contribute, he said, adding that he was preparing the agenda and identifying a possible list of participants, as well as the timing of that process. "I am convinced that, when left alone, Somalis are ready to join their ranks and efforts to get their country back on its feet in the next few months." At the same time, AMISOM must remain operational and its effectiveness must be strengthened. A new initiative should reinforce it through the deployment of extra capacity to stabilize the country. That new "peace presence" was essential, and Saudi Arabia, the custodian of the two holiest Muslim sites and a close neighbour harboring many Somali refugees, should be invited to play a leading role. Support from one or two North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member States should be made available, if necessary. On a practical level, the United Nations and the Transitional Federal Government should come to a swift agreement in close consultation with other concerned countries.

Stressing that, with the Secretary-General's support, he planned to pursue that road to peace without delay, he called on the Security Council to support those two simultaneous actions. With the Council's blessing, a "group of partners" should reinforce Somalia's security capacity and deploy its peace presence. That would bring forward national reconciliation, encourage the return of the international community to Mogadishu and beyond, and reassure neighbors about their security concerns. It would also help limit the conflict, both internally and externally, and promote economic assistance and military cooperation. That arrangement, sanctioned by a major international conference, should mark Somalia's complete return to the international community.

### Statements

AHMED DHAKKAR (Somalia), speaking on behalf of the Transitional Federal Government and "all the suffering people of Somalia",

wholeheartedly endorsed the last option mentioned by the Special Representative, namely for the Council and the United Nations system to move in the right direction with the speed necessary to regain lost time. Many Somalis all over the world wondered, after all, why it was so easy for the Council to move faster in other locations where there was conflict.

Calling on the Council to move speedily, he said the first direction should be towards implementation of already decided measures, such as the deployment of African Union peacekeepers, for which Somalia thanked the African Union and the Governments of Uganda and Ethiopia for their help in the country's hour of need. Second, it must be possible for the Council to come up with an acceptable formula to move ahead in the political and security spheres. It would not be in the interest of the United Nations system to delay real action. Since the civil war of 1991, Somali pride had been cruelly dented, but there was faith that the people would regain their strength. Somalia supported fully the position taken by the Special Representative and endorsed the need for the Council to move fast in the right direction. Somalia had faith in the Council and the United Nations system. Hopefully, five years from now, that faith would still be there.

LIU ZHENMIN (China) said the key to settlement of the situation was for the various factions to carry out national reconciliation, engage in dialogue and reach a political understanding. China appreciated the work of the Transitional Federal Government and encouraged it to continue its broad-based dialogue. However, its efforts were far from enough. The factions should take the people's aspirations for peace seriously and not set any preconditions for dialogue. The country's future depended on the Somali people, but the assistance of the international community was also indispensable.

Expressing the hope that the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) would be further strengthened, he said his country was concerned about the security situation in Somalia and appreciated the role played by AMISOM. There was an urgent need to improve the Mission's situation by providing assistance. China supported a United Nations takeover of AMISOM, but understood the difficulties that the Organization faced in deploying peacekeepers and looked forward to a contingency plan developed by the Secretariat. The humanitarian crisis in Somalia was a disaster, exceeding even the crisis in Darfur, but the international community had paid insufficient attention to Somalia compared with Darfur.

JOHN SAWERS (United Kingdom), noting that Somalia remained a challenge, said the United Nations was uniquely placed to address the country's

humanitarian and political needs and must coordinate the humanitarian response. Easing the humanitarian crisis should be an immediate priority and humanitarian access was vital. The Transitional Federal Government should ensure that humanitarian relief could be delivered freely and protect those receiving relief as well as internally displaced persons trying to return home. The United Kingdom welcomed the appointment of the new Somali Prime Minister, which would provide an opportunity to revitalize the political process.

Full implementation of the conclusions of the National Reconciliation Congress would be crucial, he said, as would the establishment of a road map to elections at the end of the transition period and the involvement of all political stakeholders. The United Kingdom welcomed the Special Representative's thinking on security and supported the proposal to establish a technical evaluation and assistance mission. The United Nations should continue to support AMISOM, and Burundi's announcement that it planned to contribute additional troops soon was welcome. The United Kingdom stood ready to consider further support for other countries to deploy.

BASO SANGQU (South Africa) said the situation in Somalia was clearly not getting better. It was characterized by grave humanitarian crisis, major political divisions, including within the Transitional Federal Government, and general insecurity. Some 200,000 people had reportedly fled their homes recently as a result of increased fighting and the country was being plunged further into an unfolding disaster. The humanitarian situation was fragile precisely because of insecurity and political divisions. Humanitarian assistance was needed to alleviate the suffering of the Somali people. However, as the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, had warned in his briefing to the Council earlier in the month, a robust humanitarian response could not make up for the absence of desperately needed progress on the political and security fronts.

It was important to continue promoting an inclusive political process and reconciliation while looking seriously into a contingency plan to the possible deployment of a peacekeeping force, he said. Despite the oft-cited admirable work of AMISOM, it was no longer sustainable or effective. The problem was not just one of resources, but also the nature of the Mission's mandate. AMISOM had been deployed as a stop-gap until the United Nations could deploy. South Africa hoped the Council would revisit the African Union's request for an expedited deployment in Somalia.

Unfortunately, there seemed to be a subtle reluctance, if not resistance, to that request, he noted, stressing that the international community had a

responsibility not to abandon the Somali people. The way towards stopping Somalia from being a constant threat to international peace and security was to encourage and support the political process and to deploy a peacekeeping operation. There was a need to create a security environment conducive to political process, and South Africa hoped the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would speed up the deployment of an assessment mission to facilitate further United Nations engagement in Somalia.

HASAN KLEIB (Indonesia) said the Council must contribute to managing and resolving the 17-year-old conflict, noting that the continuing divisions within the Transitional Federal Institutions and between the Transitional Federal Government and the opposition were the main obstacle to any possible progress on the political front. It was therefore crucial that the Government of Nur Hassan Hussein, the new Prime Minister, strengthen all-inclusive dialogue.

Voicing his country's support for the dual-track approach, he said that, on the political track, the primary task for Somalis should be the completion of the tasks set out in the Transitional Federal Charter, in particular the constitutional process, the preparation of the census and the holding of the 2009 elections. On the peacekeeping track, Indonesia favored the deployment of a United Nations multidimensional peacekeeping force, but since such a deployment was still under assessment, greater technical, logistical and financial support for AMISOM was absolutely essential.

The Council and the Secretary-General should continue to work on contingency planning, he said, adding that the strengthening of the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) should be able to support a two-track approach. Indonesia welcomed the establishment in the Secretariat of an interdepartmental and inter-agency integrated task force on Somalia. The continued presence in the country of foreign troops reflected in part the hardening stance of the opposition. The international community must contribute to a situation conducive to the withdrawal of all foreign forces that were not part of AMISOM. Indonesia called on all parties to respect international humanitarian law and appealed to all armed groups to cease any indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks affecting civilians.

PETER BURIAN (Slovakia) expressed concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Mogadishu and the rest of the country, as well as the increased fighting. The international community must do everything possible to provide humanitarian assistance to all in need. All parties must do everything to

ensure humanitarian access. The abuse of humanitarian and human rights law was unacceptable. Slovakia deplored the kidnappings and killings of journalists and human rights workers and hoped that the French journalist abducted in Puntland would be set free soon. The Transitional Federal Government's restrictions on the independent media were also a cause of worry.

A humanitarian disaster could only be avoided through national reconciliation and stabilization, he said, welcoming the appointment of the new Government. The President and Prime Minister must start political dialogue with all parties, including opposition parties. Slovakia hoped the Transitional Federal Institutions would move expeditiously to establish inclusive democratic institutions in preparing for the 2009 elections, and that the international community would play a more instrumental role in helping Somalia on its way to achieving peace and prosperity. It was also to be hoped that the international community would address ongoing arms embargo violations. Slovakia called on all States to prevent any non-State actors from supplying arms to the country.

JOHAN VERBEKE (Belgium) said the gravity of the situation in Somalia posed serious threats to peace and security in the region, but the nomination of Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein created a window of opportunity for progress during the transition process. Mr. Hussein should invite all political forces, both within and outside the country, to denounce violence and accept the Transitional Federal Charter as a framework to restore peace. The Transitional Federal Government had a responsibility to implement conclusions reached at the National Reconciliation Congress.

The humanitarian crisis had pushed dozens of non-governmental organizations to call upon the international community for help, he noted. A growing portion of the population was dependent on aid, but barriers to aid delivery remained. All stakeholders should protect the population, respect international humanitarian law, facilitate access to those in need and ease the return of internally displaced persons to their homes. The Prime Minister must facilitate humanitarian aid access and put an end to impunity. AMISOM was the only option available to ease the retreat of international forces in Somalia, and Belgium reiterated the need to reinforce the Mission, especially with respect to resources, and encouraged the United Nations and the African Union to study new forms of technical assistance and operational issues. The international community must continue and intensify its involvement with the crisis in Somalia.

LESLIE KOJO CHRISTIAN (Ghana) said the continuing political stalemate and the escalating insurgency during the review period had delayed the adoption



of a road map for the implementation of critical benchmarks in the Transitional Federal Charter. Both Government and opposition parties should respect the outcomes of the National Reconciliation Congress and implement those outcomes, including the urgent need to disarm, complete the constitutional process and conduct free and fair elections in 2009. Opposition parties that had boycotted the Reconciliation Congress should come on board. In keeping with the understanding reached at the September international donor conference in Stockholm, a coordinated and harmonized approach was needed to provide support and assistance in addressing the volatile political and security crisis, the socio-economic conditions and the humanitarian catastrophe in Somalia.

He condemned the attacks on Ugandan contingents of AMISOM and reiterated his country's appeal for international support for the Mission through the provision of the necessary financial and logistical resources. A strengthened AMISOM would expedite the withdrawal of foreign forces. The Security Council and the Secretariat should continue to accord priority attention to the development of a contingency plan for the deployment of a robust United Nations peacekeeping force to replace AMISOM. Ghana called on all parties to facilitate access through humanitarian corridors and welcomed the re-establishment of the Monitoring Group, with which all States should continue to cooperate. The Security Council should adopt concrete measures to combat piracy along the coast, and the Somali authorities should act in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

JEAN-PIERRE LACROIX (France), expressing his country's full support for Somalia's new Prime Minister, said Somalia was embroiled in an overarching political and humanitarian crisis that threatened security throughout the region. It was crucially important to meet the country's humanitarian needs. More than 600,000 individuals had been forced from their homes in 2007 and fighting was continuing in the capital. Attacks and assassinations were often answered with the launching of artillery. Humanitarian aid must be stepped up and guaranteed, and the working conditions of humanitarian staff improved. The same protection should be extended to journalists. France, while demanding the immediate release of the French journalist kidnapped on Sunday, would continue to provide protection for aid shipments. The crisis would not be resolved without political dialogue and the Transitional Federal Government must engage with the opposition in a dialogue that was as inclusive as possible. The Council must provide unreserved support for the new Prime Minister.

He expressed support for the idea of bringing together a small group of decision makers, adding that the notion of an ad hoc force to supplement

AMISOM deserved the Council's consideration. The Council must not rule out any option, including that of an ad hoc force, AMISOM or a United Nations peacekeeping force. The Council must also review the rapid deployment of a technical assessment team. There was a need for greater dialogue in Somalia. France had participated actively in the deployment of the peacekeeping force in Burundi and supported the notion that the United Nations must change its approach to Somalia. There was a need for full commitment by the international community, as the status quo was not acceptable. France hoped the Council would be able to carry out a rapid examination of the options presented by the Special Representative.

ALFREDO SUESCUM (Panama) said Somalia's humanitarian situation had been given special attention in the reports presented by Louise Arbour, High Commissioner for Human Rights, on 12 December, and John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, on 6 December. Ms. Arbour had outlined her concerns about the human rights situation of Somali civilians, particularly in Mogadishu, while Mr. Holmes had addressed the terrible conditions in the refugee camps surrounding the capital city that were home to 600,000 individuals, perhaps the largest group of internally displaced persons in the world. Recent political events underscored the weakening of the Transitional Federal Institutions, which should incite the international community to show greater support. The Administration of the new Somali Prime Minister was at risk, in the short and medium term, of collapsing along with the international community's efforts to stabilize Somalia.

While there were signs of progress in the humanitarian coverage, much more must be done, he said. The Government and the opposition must address the critical security situation. AMISOM's mandate expired in February, but the Council had yet to strengthen or replace that operation. The Council must make fundamental decisions in the coming weeks either to deploy a multinational force or a peacekeeping force. AMISOM must be strengthened and a technical evaluation mission must be sent. The Government must institute a zero-tolerance policy towards soldiers and civilians holding illegal arms, reduce excessive border controls and better protect aid workers and shipments. The Council's lack of action could prejudice its credibility. It must act energetically and promptly address those challenges.

KONSTANTIN K. DOLGOV (Russian Federation) expressed serious concern about the security and humanitarian situation in Somalia, noting that, despite the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government, AMISOM and other troops, the

situation was deteriorating. All parties, including the Transitional Federal Government, must take decisive steps for a speedy normalization of the situation and to assist the peace building process. National dialogue and national reconciliation would prevent a further slide into humanitarian disaster.

Warning that the conflict could still spread further into the region and destabilize the Horn of Africa, he stressed the importance of ensuring strict adherence to the arms embargo, and of neighbouring countries helping to reach a settlement. Maintaining the status quo was unacceptable. Full deployment of AMISOM would create the conditions for progress in national reconciliation and it should therefore be strengthened. It was essential to continue planning for a United Nations peacekeeping operation; but, under present circumstances, due to the security situation, such an operation was not possible. A multidimensional peacekeeping operation for Somalia should be considered with care.

JORGE VOTO-BERNALES (Peru) welcomed the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government to implement national reconciliation. The convening of the National Reconciliation Congress had been a milestone and it was crucial that the dialogue between parties, including opposition groups, continue. The Transitional Federal Government must show openness in dealing with opposition groups and develop a road map including the constitutional process, the population census and the 2009 elections. Opposition groups must lay down their arms and avoid violence. All parties must understand that only through political dialogue could sustainable peace be achieved.

Expressing concern about the humanitarian situation, he said that, due to the security situation, access to aid was being impeded. There were 750,000 internally displaced persons in Somalia, and in view of their plight, Peru urged all parties to guarantee strict compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights. Peru commended the AMISOM troops for their professionalism while working in a high-risk environment and asked that the operation be strengthened through a new deployment of troops.

JACKIE WOLCOTT (United States) expressed the hope that the Transitional Federal Government could focus on a comprehensive, all-inclusive political process and work to alleviate the current impediments to humanitarian aid. It must move quickly to draft a new Constitution and form a new electoral commission so that elections could be held in 2009. All Somali stakeholders should address key elements of the political process.

She said that in fiscal 2007, the United States had been the largest bilateral donor to Somalia, giving \$90 million in addition to aid for development and democracy assistance. All Somalis and regional actors should stop using Somalia as a safe haven for attacks against civilians and work towards an effective ceasefire as the best way to isolate extremist elements. AMISOM should be commended for its commitments and for working under dangerous circumstances, and the United States called on more countries to contribute troops.

Stressing the need for contingency planning for a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, she said the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should send a technical assessment mission to Somalia as soon as possible. It was vitally important to begin contingency planning now, so the United Nations could deploy as soon as possible. The United States commended the task force of combined partners for their work in protecting humanitarian cargo shipments from piracy. A Council resolution was needed to address the problem of piracy off the coast of Somalia. The United States was gravely concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation, especially in south-central Somalia, and welcomed the close cooperation from the United Nations country team in Nairobi.

NASSIR ABDULAZIZ AL-NASSER (Qatar) said the United Nations could play a larger role in mobilizing and providing support for the African Union's efforts to strengthen its Mission in Somalia by completing the deployment of Burundian troops this month. Qatar agreed with the view that ensuring stability in Somalia required working simultaneously on political and security concerns, and commended the Special Representative's efforts to push the national reconciliation process forward and create the necessary conditions for the country to continue towards stability and democracy. That could only be achieved by ending the violence, withdrawing foreign troops and building constitutional democratic institutions. Somalia must continue to expand the political reconciliation process to include all groups. It must also form a Constitution, develop a road map for the remainder of the transitional period and pave the way for a census and elections before the end of that period.

All parties should refrain from using violence to express their political positions, jeopardize the safety of civilians, impede humanitarian access to civilians and target humanitarian workers, journalists and AMISOM staff, he said. Qatar hoped for the formation of a new broad-based Government that would be able to communicate well with the opposition. It was also to be hoped that the new Government would play an effective role in mitigating the worsening humanitarian situation, especially since Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein had a

background and experience in that area. Somalia's dire humanitarian situation was the worst in Africa, and social and health indicators for women and children were among the worst in the world. The flow of humanitarian aid must continue and coordinated efforts must be made by various international and regional actors, as well as the Transitional Federal Government, in that regard.

LUC JOSEPH OKIO (Congo) said the situation in Somalia remained serious, both in the security and political spheres. The humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate and the number of people needing humanitarian assistance was growing. There were continuous violations of the arms embargo and weapons from countries in the region continued to be supplied to extremist groups. Piracy was also continuing and Congo welcomed the courageous French initiative to provide protection for humanitarian convoys. It was regrettable that the initiative would soon come to an end without others taking over, so that pirates would have free rein until new measures were taken.

Appealing for a ceasefire and national reconciliation in the context of an intra-Somali political dialogue, he expressed support for a multidimensional force and stressed that a solution to the situation should take into account the regional aspects of the problem. The Council should support the new Government and Prime Minister Hussein, and advise that Government to continue its efforts on the basis of the recommendations made by the National Reconciliation Congress. The Council should also ensure the strengthening of UNPOS so that it could play a leading role in coordinating efforts to strengthen AMISOM and establish a commission of inquiry, among other things. Congo condemned the kidnapping of the French journalist and called for his immediate release.

Council President MARCELLO SPATAFORA (Italy), speaking in his national capacity, said Somalia was a strong priority for his country, noting that the scale of human suffering in the country had become unacceptable. Addressing that emergency must be a top priority. The Red Cross, non-governmental organizations and the humanitarian community had done great work to alleviate the suffering but without a consistent and strong approach, the humanitarian approach could not solve the crisis.

He said the situation in Somalia was a serious threat to international peace and security, and the agenda for Somalia should therefore be radically changed. Business as usual was no longer an option. A coherent multidimensional strategy was necessary, with the paramount goal of establishing a United Nations peacekeeping operation. Hopefully, concrete options towards that end would be included in the contingency plan, which

should be presented to the Council soon. After all, that plan had been requested in August. Moreover, the technical assessment mission, requested in resolution 1772 (2007), must be dispatched to the region without delay. Keeping the United Nations option alive would also encourage African countries to participate in AMISOM. Strengthening AMISOM was a crucial priority and, to that end, Italy had provided €10 million. But support for AMISOM should not prevent the Council from responding to the African Union request for United Nations intervention as soon as possible. UNPOS should also be strengthened.

JOÃO SALGUEIRO (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the situation in Somalia posed a significant threat to peace and security in the Horn of Africa and beyond. Urgent efforts were necessary by all parties towards an inclusive political process. The European Union welcomed the appointment of the new Prime Minister and encouraged him to invite all political forces, inside and outside Somalia, that renounced violence and accepted the Transitional Federal Charter. The Transitional Federal Institutions had the prime responsibility of implementing the outcome of the National Reconciliation Congress and establishing a road map for actions that must include preparations for a constitutional referendum and elections by 2009.

Condemning all acts of violence and calling on all parties to cease hostilities and engage in ceasefire, confidence-building and security arrangements, he also urged the Transitional Federal Institutions, Ethiopia and all other actors in the country to ensure humanitarian access, respect human rights and international humanitarian law and facilitate the secure return of displaced persons. Peace could not be built on impunity, and the Transitional Federal Government must investigate all human rights abuses and bring those responsible to justice.

Noting that AMISOM was presently the only available option to facilitate the withdrawal of foreign and regional forces from Somalia, he reiterated the need to strengthen it, including by identifying substantial new financial support. The United Nations should provide more support and move forward with contingency planning for a possible peacekeeping operation in Somalia. The European Union stood ready to support the implementation of the international action plan and welcomed the French initiative to protect World Food Programme (WFP) vessels.

JOHAN L. LØVALD (Norway) said security and lasting stability could only be achieved through a genuine and broad-based political reconciliation that would include all Somali political forces that renounced violence and were ready

to take part in a political process. In order for the Transitional Federal Institutions to secure support and gain credibility among the Somali people, it was essential that the Government be able to deliver a minimum of basic services. So far, that had hardly been possible. In order to act in a more determined manner in dealing with the humanitarian crisis, it might be time to consider a compact among the Transitional Federal Institutions, civil society and other groups, with the United Nations and international agencies securing service delivery.

He said it was imperative to improve the security situation, which meant there was an urgent need to strengthen or substitute the present AMISOM force with a more substantial peace-building mission. That would also relieve Ethiopia of its present security burden. Due to the prevailing security situation, the international presence in Mogadishu was negligible at best, which was hampering the work of humanitarian agencies. It was therefore important for the United Nations and international agencies to increase their presence inside Mogadishu. Such a presence was important for service delivery and as a signal to the Somali people that the international community cared.

Mr. OULD-ABDALLAH, in closing remarks, said the Council must review its working approach to Somalia, stressing that, if the working method in place for the past 17 years was continued, not only would there not be results, but the United Nations would risk losing credibility. The Organization could continue with the status quo of providing useful and essential humanitarian assistance, but there were limits to that after 17 years.

After so much money and energy had been spent, the question remained about what should be done, he said. Withdrawing from Somalia was morally difficult and it was crucially important to accompany the Somali people in their political discussions. They could act consistently and seriously, but the United Nations must give them security and reassure them that if it could provide escorts on the high seas it could also give them stability and thus reassure the population of Mogadishu.

He acknowledged that the United Nations could not send a field mission at the present time and that its rules forbade it from doing so. The Organization could go to Somaliland and Puntland, but Mogadishu was prohibited. Further, there was a sense that there was no AMISOM as it comprised only the Ugandan contingent. The operation could be strengthened and the Council knew better than he how to strengthen it. Perhaps neighboring countries in the region could contribute more troops.

Council President SPATAFORA (Italy), in a concluding statement, assured the Special Representative of the Council's full support for his work, noting that today's debate had been organized to strengthen his hand. The strengthening of AMISOM was a necessity and also a matter of credibility. Tribute should be paid to the Government of Uganda for providing troops to the operation.

---

## **Security Council again asks UN chief to plan for possible UN force in Somalia**

### **The Associated Press**

Thursday, December 20, 2007

**UNITED NATIONS:** The Security Council asked the U.N. chief to plan for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in Somalia to replace African Union troops.

The council said Wednesday it was reiterating a request it initially made in August which U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon rejected.

The council also said it looked forward to hearing more details of proposals by Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, the new U.N. envoy for Somalia, on improving security and promoting political reconciliation in the conflict-wracked nation which has not had an effective government since 1991.

Ould-Abdallah on Monday urged Saudi Arabia to use its "moral authority" to get more troops on the ground and bring the opposing parties together to help end the violence in the Horn of Africa nation. He said Saudi, the custodian of the two Muslim holiest sites and a close neighbor with many Somali refugees, should be invited to play a leading role.

He said he wants to simultaneously launch new political talks and a new security initiative that would beef up the 1,800 AU troops from Uganda now on the ground in Somalia as an interim measure, ahead of an eventual takeover by U.N. peacekeepers.

With the support of the secretary-general, Ould-Abdallah said he plans to pursue this two-track "road to peace" without delay because security is deteriorating daily.



He asked council members for their support and told reporters afterward their reaction was "very positive."

A statement from the Security Council read at a formal meeting Wednesday welcomed the U.N. envoy's call on the international community to commit itself to a clear course of action. But the council did not make a commitment.

Instead, the statement from the 15 members said the council looks forward "to the early establishment of an effective government" in Somalia and urged all Somali parties "to reject violence and ... to enter into a substantial dialogue aimed at achieving a full and all-inclusive national reconciliation," with the support of Ould-Abdallah.

Somalia has not had a functioning government since clan-based warlord's toppled dictator Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991 and then turned on each other, sinking the poverty-stricken nation of seven million people into chaos. Its weak transitional government, backed by Ethiopian troops, is struggling to quash an Islamic insurgency that has killed thousands of civilians this year.

The 1,800 Ugandan peacekeepers who arrived in Somalia early this year are officially the vanguard of a larger African Union peacekeeping force, although no other country has sent reinforcements so far. In August, the council called on the secretary-general to begin planning for the possible deployment of U.N. peacekeepers to replace the AU force.

Ban opposed a U.N. deployment in early November because of heavy fighting and suggested instead a robust multinational force or a coalition of volunteer nations to help restore security. But in late November, the council rejected Ban's opposition and underlined its call for contingency planning for a U.N. peacekeeping force.

In Wednesday's statement, the council reiterated that request.

---